

# THE EURO BRIEF

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**JULY 01, 2018**

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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### EUROPE – US

#### [EU must plan for 'worst-case scenarios' with Trump's US, warns Donald Tusk](#)

Tusk has told EU countries to prepare for “worst-case scenarios” as relations with the US under Trump rapidly deteriorate and wrote to EU states setting out his concern amid a growing trade war and Trump’s behavior threatens the West’s unity. [*Independent*, June 27, 2018]

#### [US ambassador to Estonia resigns 'over Trump comments'](#)

The US ambassador to Estonia is resigning, reportedly in frustration at remarks made by Trump that the EU was 'set up to take advantage of the United States, to attack our piggy bank' and that 'NATO is as bad as NAFTA'. [*BBC*, June 30, 2018]

### EUROPE – RUSSIA

#### [Italy pushes for de-escalation as EU moves to renew Russia sanctions](#)

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said the renewal of EU economic sanctions against Russia should not be automatic, as Rome seeks to resume EU funding to small Russian firms to ease tensions with Moscow. [*Reuters*, June 27, 2018]

#### ['Protect human rights defenders,' EU tells Russia](#)

The EU has called on Russian authorities to drop the criminal cases against human rights activists Oyub Titiyev and Yury Dmitriyev, saying they are facing "questionable" charges. [*Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, June 27, 2018]

### EUROPE – EAST ASIA

#### [China assures EU of good intent at Eastern Europe summits](#)

A senior Chinese diplomat said that China recognizes that there are worries about its cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries, but is not seeking to undermine the EU and divide the continent. [*Reuters*, June 29, 2018]

### [EU and China discuss economic and trade relations at the 7th High-level Economic and Trade Dialogue](#)

Under the overall theme of "Harnessing Globalisation", the discussions covered a range of strategic issues, such as global economic governance, trade and investment questions, digital economy, climate and environmental cooperation, and connectivity [European Commission, June 25, 2018]

### **EUROPE – MIDDLE EAST**

#### [Macron congratulates Turkey's Erdogan and urges calmer dialogue](#)

French President has congratulated Tayyip Erdogan after the Turkish president secured sweeping new executive powers in presidential and parliamentary elections and stressed the importance of a calmer dialogue between Turkey and the EU. [Reuters, June 26, 2018]

#### [Italian officials allegedly met with Syria's top military adviser](#)

Human rights groups claimed that Italy's decision to host a secret meeting between the head of Syria's national security bureau and top Italian officials violated EU rules and called on the commission to initiate a formal infringement procedure against Italy. [The Guardian, June 29, 2018]

### **EUROPE – ISRAEL**

#### [Prince William in Israel for first-ever official visit by senior British royal](#)

The Prince's visit was organized at the behest of the British government amid tensions in the region and although his trip is considered non-political, Prince William is expected to meet with the Israeli Prime Minister and Palestinian President. [Deutsche Welle, June 25, 2018]

#### [Cyprus considers Israeli proposal to inspect cargo ships bound for Gaza](#)

Cyprus is considering an Israeli defense minister proposal to build a dedicated pier in an existing port or employ an established pier to receive cargo ships carrying goods for Gaza. [The Irish Times, June 27, 2018]

## **INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

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### **EU POLITICS**

#### [Austria takes over EU presidency with pledge for security](#)

Austria has taken over the rotating presidency of the EU with a pledge to better secure the 28-nation bloc's external borders under the motto "a Europe that protects" as "we know that the international environment is difficult right now." [The Washington Post, June 30, 2018]

#### [EU condemns rescue boats picking up drowning refugees in Mediterranean as leaders side with populists](#)

The EU has condemned rescue boats picking up drowning refugees in the Mediterranean, in a dramatic hardening of the bloc's border policy that brings it in line with the continent's anti-immigration populists. [Independent, June 30, 2018]

### [Migrant crisis: EU leaders plan secure migrant centers](#)

The controlled centers would be set up by EU states on a voluntary basis, migrants whose claims were rejected would be "returned" and refugees could be resettled in EU states which agreed to take them. [BBC, June 29, 2018]

### [Orbán calls EU migration deal 'great victory' for central Europe](#)

Central European leaders have hailed an EU summit deal that will not oblige them to take in refugees, while Balkan states insist they will not host major migrant camps amid plans for "disembarkation platforms" outside the bloc. [The Irish Times, June 29, 2018]

### [Brexit: EU leaders say single-market access for goods a nonstarter](#)

May has been told by European leaders that an attempt to protect the UK's industrial base by gaining single market access for goods alone after Brexit is a nonstarter, as the Irish prime minister warned: "We are not going to let them destroy the EU." [The Guardian, June 29, 2018]

### [EU lawmakers want to punish Hungary's Orbán for democratic slide](#)

Some European lawmakers urged the EU to consider stripping Hungary of its voting rights to punish it for weakening democracy and the rule of law, a move which prompted a swift rebuke from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. [Reuters, June 25, 2018]

### [Poland refuses to back down against EU as they prepare to block voting powers](#)

Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki insisted his government will not revoke their judicial reforms, despite European Commission's intervention into Warsaw's justice system and imposing financial penalties. [Express, June 29, 2018]

## **DOMESTIC POLITICS**

### [Angela Merkel's government in fresh doubt as German coalition crisis talks fails to resolve migrant dispute](#)

Merkel's coalition parties described their row on migrant policy as very serious after four hours of crisis talks failed to defuse a dispute that threatens to tear apart her three-month old government. [The Telegraph, June 27, 2018]

### ['Race' out, gender equality in as France updates constitution](#)

French MPs agreed to remove the word "race" from the first article of the constitution, which says all citizens are equal before the law "regardless of origin, race or religion" and add a ban on gender discrimination. [France24, June 28, 2018]

### [Romanian government survives no-confidence vote](#)

The Romanian government survived a no-confidence vote in parliament after the three opposition parties that initiated the vote attacked the government on wrecking the economy since they took over and making controversial changes to the judiciary. [Politico, June 27, 2018]

### [Thousands march in Scottish Independence rally in Bannockburn](#)

Thousands of campaigners marched on the 704th anniversary of the most famous Scottish battle as part of an independence rally organised by the pro-independence organisation All Under One Banner. [The Scotsman, June 23, 2018]

## **JEWISH COMMUNITIES**

### [Link between antisemitism and migration unproven, analyst tells Euronews](#)

In Jewish communities there's a fear of potential anti-Semitism among refugees, but the rise in anti-Semitic violence across Europe is in a context of tensions of identity, of a surge by the radical, populist and extreme right and social networks. [*Euronews*, June 29, 2018]

### [Poland makes partial U-turn on Holocaust law after Israel row](#)

Threat of jail removed for those who attribute crimes of Nazi Germany to Poles after Poland's president, Andrzej Duda, has signed a legal amendment to the legislation. [*The Guardian*, June 27, 2018]